VIGILIAE CHRISTIANAE

VIGILIAE CHRISTIANAE *A Review of Early Christian Life and Language*

Aims & Scope
This journal contains articles and short notices of an historical and cultural, linguistic or philological nature on Early Christian literature posterior to the New Testament in the widest sense of the word, as well as on Christian epigraphy and archaeology. Church and dogmatic history will only be dealt with if they bear directly on social history; Byzantine and Mediaeval literature only insofar as it exhibits continuity with the Early Christian period. The journal will also contain reviews of important studies, published elsewhere.

Editors-in-Chief
J. den Boeft, Amsterdam, B.D. Ehrman, Chapel Hill, J. van Oort, Utrecht/Nijmegen, D.T. Runia, Melbourne, C. Scholten, Köln, J.C.M. van Winden, Leiden

Associate Editors
S.L. de Blaauw (Nymegen) – A. Le Boulluec (Paris) – A. Davids (Nijmegen) – R.M. Grant (Chicago) – Marguerite Harl (Paris) – A. Kamesar (Cincinnati) – J. Leemans (Leuven) – J.-P. Mahé (Paris) – Elaine Pagels (Princeton) – G. Rouwhorst (Tilburg) – R. Staats (Kiel)

Manuscripts
All manuscripts and editorial correspondence should be sent to the Secretary of the Editorial Board, Professor J. den Boeft, Commanderijpoort 4-6, 2311 WB Leiden, The Netherlands. Books for review should be sent to Professor J. van Oort, Department of Ecclesiastical History, P.O. Box 80105, 3508 TC Utrecht, The Netherlands. E-mail: j.van.oort@planet.nl.

Instructions for Authors & Open Access
Instructions for Authors can be found on our web site at brill.nl/vc. The Instructions for Authors include details on how to publish on an Open Access basis with Brill Open.

Abstracting & Indexing
Vigiliae Christianae is abstracted/indexed in American Humanities Index; Arts & Humanities Citation Index; Bibliographic Index; Bibliography of the History of Art; Current Contents; Dietrich's Index Philosophicus; Fanatic Reader; International Bibliography of Book Reviews of Scholarly Literature; International Philosophy Bibliography; Internationale Bibliographie der Zeitschriftenliteratur aus allen Gebieten des Wissens/International Bibliography of Periodicals from All Fields of Knowledge; Linguistic Bibliography; MLA International Bibliography of Books & Articles on the Modern Languages and Literatures; New Testament Abstracts; Religion Index One: Periodicals; Religion Index Two: Multi Author Works; Religious & Theological Abstracts; Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale; Research Alert (Philadelphia); Russian Academy of Sciences Bibliographies.

Vigiliae Christianae (print ISSN 0042-6032, online ISSN 1570-0720) is published 5 times a year by Brill, Plantijnstraat 2, 2321 JC Leiden, The Netherlands, tel + 31 (0)71 5353500, fax + 31 (0)71 5317532.

Vigiliae Christianae

A Review of Early Christian Life and Language

VOLUME LXIV (2010)

BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON

Instructions for Authors

(1) Contributions should initially be submitted as hard copy only (in duplicate). A disk or CD should only be sent on acceptance or with the revised manuscript. Both WordPerfect and Microsoft Word are accepted word-processing programs. ASCII-formatted disks are also accepted. Contributions submitted should not have been published elsewhere.

(2) Manuscripts should be printed with a wide margin and double space between the lines. Please use one side of the paper only. The first page should have ample space at the top around the title.

(3) Titles should be as short as possible. A (shortened) running title should be provided.

(4) An abstract of 100-150 words and 2-6 keywords, in English, should be provided.

(5) Italics should be used sparingly (but see below nos. 6 and 7).

(6) Latin quotations should be underlined to be printed in italics. Syriac, Hebrew and Coptic quotations should be transcribed unless the original version is indispensable.

(7) References should be given in footnotes with continuous numbering. Titles of books and of journals (not of papers in journals) should be in italics to be printed in italics. For example:
H.A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers* 1 (Cambridge, Mass. ^{4}1964) 106-111.
L.W. Barnard, "The Antecedents of Arius," *Vigiliae Christianae* 24 (1970) 172-188.
Gregory of Nyssa, *De hom. opif.* 24 (PG 44,212D) – Greg.Nyss. *Hom. opif.* 24 (PG 44,212D).
Tertullian, *Adv.Marc.* 4,28,1 – Tert. *Adv.Marc.* 4,28,1.

(8) Correction. Authors are requested to check their manuscripts, and especially their quotations, most carefully, and to type out all Greek, as later corrections at the proof stage are expensive and time-consuming. Corrections by which the original text is altered will be charged.

(9) Offprints. Contributors will receive 15 offprints free of charge for articles and 3 free offprints for reviews.

BRILL
LEIDEN • BOSTON

© 2010 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands

Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints BRILL, Hotei Publishing, IDC Publishers, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers and VSP.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission of the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by the publisher provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.

Printed in the Netherlands (on acid-free paper).

BRILL

Vigiliae Christianae 64 (2010) 1-30

Vigiliae Christianae
brill.nl/vc

Some Observations on Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, Book Five

Matyáš Havrda
Center for Patristic, Medieval and Renaissance Texts, Palacký University, Olomouc, Czech Republic
havrda@ics.cas.cz

Abstract
The article is a collection of comments to various passages of Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata* V (1,1-2; 2,5-6; 3,2; 6,3; 8,6; 18,3; 23,2-24,2; 38,5; 71,2-3; 83,5; 90,2; 98,4; 133,7; 141,3). Its aim is to complement earlier research by re-examining the syntactic structure or the meaning of terms, by adducing new parallels or by proposing fresh explanations of difficult segments of the text.

Keywords
philosophy of faith, Basilides, being-life-thinking, angelology, exegesis of the High Priest, symbolism, negative theology, Valentinianism, soteriology

The following paper is a selection of observations I made during my work on the Czech translation of Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata*, book five.[1] Out of the few instances where I was able to add anything to the rich and insightful commentary of Alain Le Boulluec, published in 1981,[2] or to more recent contributions that shed light on individual passages of the book,[3] I present those that, in my judgment, open new possibilities of

[1] The translation with introduction and notes was published by the publishing house OIKOYMENH (Prague) in 2009. This paper is an amplified version of notes to selected passages in that volume. My thanks are due to James Kelhoffer for helpful suggestions concerning both style and content.

[2] Clément d'Alexandrie, *Les Stromates, Stromate V, Tome II*: Commentaire, bibliographie et index par A. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279 Cerf: Paris 1981 (= *SChr* 279).

[3] Apart from contributions noted below, I found the most useful parallels and elucidations in the following articles and books: P. Derchain, "Les hiéroglyphes à l'époque ptolémaïque," in: Cl. Baurain–C. Bonnet–V. Krings (edd.), *Phoinikeia grammata. Lire et écrire en*

© Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 2010 DOI: 10.1163/004260310X12584264873897

interpretation of textual meaning or might be interesting from the perspective of the history of ideas. The former group includes attempts to take a fresh look at the syntactic construction or the meaning of terms in *Strom.* V,2,5-6; 3,2; 23,2-24,2; 38,5; 83,5 and 98,4. The latter group includes referential and explanatory notes to *Strom*. V,1,1-2; 6,3; 8,6; 18,3; 71,2-3; 90,2; 133,7 and 141,3. I quote the text of *Stromata* V according to the Sources Chrétiennes edition.[4]

> V,1,1-2/*SChr* 1,3-7: εἰσὶ γὰρ οἱ τὴν <μὲν> πίστιν ἡμῶν περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ, τὴν δὲ γνῶσιν περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς εἶναι διαστέλλοντες. Λέληθεν δὲ αὐτοὺς ὅτι πιστεῦσαι μὲν ἀληθῶς τῷ υἱῷ δεῖ, ὅτι τε υἱὸς καὶ ὅτι ἦλθεν καὶ πῶς καὶ διὰ τί καὶ περὶ τοῦ πάθους, γνῶναι δὲ ἀνάγκη τίς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.
>
> Some people make the following distinction: whereas our faith concerns the Son, knowledge concerns the Father. But they fail to see that while we must truly believe the Son that he is the Son and that he came and how and why and about his passion, it is also necessary to know who the Son of God is.

In response to anonymous opponents who distinguish between Christian faith and knowledge in the sense that the former is related to the Son and the latter to the Father, Clement argues that, in addition to being believed,

---

Méditerranée, Namur 1991, 243-256; A. van den Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo in the Stromateis*, Brill: Leiden–New York–København–Köln 1988; S.R.C. Lilla, "The Neoplatonic Hypostases and the Christian Trinity," in: M. Joyal, *Studies in Plato and the Platonic Tradition: Essays Presented to John Whittaker*, Ashgate: Aldershot–Brookfield 1997, 127-189; J. Mansfeld, "Compatible Alternatives: Middle Platonic Theology and the Xenophanes Reception," in: R. van den Broek–T. Baarda–J. Mansfeld (ed.), *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, Brill: Leiden–New York–København–Köln 1988; J. Whittaker, "Goodness Power Wisdom: A Middle Platonic Triad," in: M.-O. Goulet-Cazé–G. Madec–D. O'Brien (eds.), in: ΣΟΦΙΗΣ ΜΑΙΗΤΟΡΕΣ. *« Chercheurs de sagesse », Hommage à Jean Pépin*, Paris 1992, 179-194; D. Wyrwa, *Die christliche Platonaneignung in den Stromateis des Clemens von Alexandrien*, De Gruyter: Berlin–New York 1983.

4) Clément d'Alexandrie, *Les Stromates, Stromate V, Tome I*: Introduction, texte critique et index par A. Le Boulluec, traduction par P. Voulet, *SChr* 278 Cerf: Paris 1981 (= *SChr* 278). I normally refer to Clement's works according to the standard division and subdivision of paragraphs introduced by R. Klotz (1831-1834) and O. Stählin (1906). When referring to lines in the *SChr* edition, I follow its arrangement according to which line numbers are linked to Klotz paragraphs; e.g., *SChr* 3,6-12 refers to Klotz paragraph 3, lines 6-12, according to the *SChr* edition. With the exception of *Stromata* V, I quote Clement's work according to the latest *GCS* editions (*Clemens Alexandrinus I-III*, ed. O. Stählin–L. Früchtel–U. Treu, *GCS*, Akademie Verlag: Berlin, vol. I: ^{3}1972, vol. II: ^{4}1985, vol. III: ^{2}1970).

the Son must also be known.[5] He explains the relation between faith and knowledge as a difference between believing ὅτι υἱὸς [scil. ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς] καὶ ὅτι ἦλθεν κτλ. and knowing τίς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱός. This seems to be a modification of the epistemological distinction between assuming that something is the case (ὅτι ἔστι) and understanding what something is (τί ἐστι), first elaborated by Aristotle.[6] The distinction was applied to the enquiry about god(s) in late Hellenistic philosophy.[7] For Clement, the standpoint he calls

---

[5] As noted by Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 10, there seems to be no parallel to the distinction Clement ascribes to his opponents that would enable us to plausibly identify them with any known group. J.L. Kovacs, "Concealment and Gnostic Exegesis: Clement of Alexandria's Interpretation of the Tabernacle," in: *Studia Patristica* 31, 1997, 415-416, 418-419, argues that Clement responds to Valentinians in this passage, but the references she adduces to support this point are not convincing. Moreover, the view that faith concerns the Son, as opposed to knowledge which concerns the Father, does not fit very well into the framework of the Valentinian thought as we know it. As Clement reports elsewhere, the Valentinians conceived the Son primarily as a mediator of the knowledge of the Father who is himself unknown (cf. *Excerpta* 7,1; 31,3-4). In the versions of the Valentinian soteriology that adopt the motif of the "psychic Christ," the latter is understood as merely an "image of the Son" affiliated with the demiurge (*Excerpta* 47,3; cf. 23,3; 62,1-3). It is perhaps more likely that Clement responds to some Platonist intellectuals who fail to see the connection between the knowledge of "the Father of the universe" (cf. Plato, *Tim.* 28c3-4) and Christian faith that Jesus is the Son of God. Compare the arguments of the Middle Platonist Celsus to the effect that Christian beliefs about Jesus are incompatible with the philosophical notion of God (cf. Origen, *C. Cels.* VII,14-15, 36, 42; VIII,14). Clement's opponents in *Strom*. V,1,1-2 might be similar to those mentioned in *Strom*. I,88,5, who suspect that the idea that God has a son who suffered is mythical. It is conceivable that some of these critics mockingly described the standpoint of Christian faith against the background of Plato, *Tim.* 40d8-e3: "We should believe (πειστέον) the assertions of those figures of the past who claim to be the offspring of gods. They must surely have been well informed about their own ancestors. So we cannot avoid believing the children of gods (ἀδύνατον οὖν θεῶν παισὶν ἀπιστεῖν), even though their accounts lack plausible or compelling proofs." (Translated by D.J. Zeyl, in: J.M. Cooper–D.S. Hutchinson [eds.], *Plato, Complete Works*, Indianapolis–Cambridge 1997, 1244, slightly modified). Cf. *Strom*. V,84,1-2, where Clement quotes the latter passage from the *Timaeus* as a "clear testimony" about the Saviour and his prophets, perhaps in order to turn his opponents' weapon against them.

[6] Cf. Aristotle, *An. post.* 71a11-13: διχῶς δ' ἀναγκαῖον προγινώσκειν· τὰ μὲν γάρ, ὅτι ἔστι, προϋπολαμβάνειν ἀναγκαῖον, τὰ δέ, τί τὸ λεγόμενόν ἐστι, ξυνιέναι δεῖ, τὰ δ' ἄμφω κτλ. ("It is necessary to be already aware of things in two ways: of some things it is necessary to believe already that they are, of some things one must grasp what the thing said is, and of others both…"; translated by J. Barnes, *Aristotle's Posterior Analytics*, Oxford 1975, 1).

[7] Cf. the references collected by W. Theiler, *Die Vorbereitung des Neuplatonismus*, Berlin 1950, pp. 140, 142-144. See especially Philo of Alexandria, *De spec. leg.* I,32: δύο δ' ἐν ταῖς περὶ θεοῦ ζητήσεσι τὰ ἀνωτάτω ταῦτ' ἐπαπορεῖ ἡ διάνοια τοῦ φιλοσοφοῦντος ἀνόθως·

κοινὴ πίστις, apart from confessing the existence of God,[8] includes some propositional beliefs concerning the Son: ὅτι τε υἱὸς καὶ ὅτι ἦλθεν κτλ.[9]

> V,2,5-6/*SChr* 2,16-21: ἡ μὲν γὰρ κοινὴ πίστις καθάπερ θεμέλιος ὑπόκειται… ἡ δὲ ἐξαίρετος ἐποικοδομουμένη συντελειοῦται τῷ πιστῷ καὶ συναπαρτίζεται αὐτῇ ἡ ἐκ μαθήσεως περιγινομένη καὶ τοῦ λόγου τὰς ἐντολὰς ἐπιτελεῖν κτλ.
>
> The common faith, on the one hand, is like an underlying foundation… the excellent faith, on the other hand, being built upon it, matures along with the believer, and the faith that arises from learning is perfected along with it so that it can fulfill the commandments of the Word…

In this passage (whose textual presentation, first printed in 1960, is based on a quotation in Codex Laura B 113), two kinds of πίστις are distinguished: ἡ μὲν κοινὴ… ἡ δὲ ἐξαίρετος.[10] It is not clearly stated which of

---

ἓν μὲν εἰ ἔστι τὸ θεῖον,… ἕτερον δὲ τὸ τί ἐστι κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν ("But in such searching two principal questions arise which demand the consideration of a genuine philosopher. One is whether the Deity exists…, the other is what the Deity is in essence"; translated by F.H. Colson, *Philo* VII, LCL, 117); Cicero, *Tusc*. I,36:… *deos esse natura opinamur, qualesque sint ratione cognoscimus*… ("…we believe by nature that gods exist and we get to know by reason what they are like…"). Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 20-21, refers to Theiler's discussion in connection with his commentary on Clement's concept of κοινὴ πίστις.

[8] Cf. *Strom*. VII,55,2: καὶ ἄνευ τοῦ ζητεῖν τὸν θεὸν ὁμολογοῦσα εἶναι τοῦτον [scil. πίστις] καὶ δοξάζουσα ὡς ὄντα ("Faith… without making God a matter of enquiry confesses that he exists and glorifies him for his existence"). The passage is quoted by Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 20.

[9] Cf. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 21. According to Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 11, Clement's description of the content of faith reflects the part of the pre-baptismal catechetic instruction that is concerned with the Son. Since the statements concerning the Son are presented as the content of faith (rather than mere instruction), Clement presumably refers specifically to the baptismal confession formula. In addition to the Christological part of the baptismal formula in *Traditio apostolica* 21, mentioned by Le Boulluec in this connection, compare also the creedal statements preserved by Ignatius, *Eph.* 18,2; *Trall.* 9,1-2; *Smyrn.* 1,1-2, and Justin, *Apol.* I,13,3; cf. J. Pelikan–V. Hotchkiss (eds.), *Creeds and Confessions of Faith in Christian Tradition*, I, New Haven–London 2003, 40, 46. Clement's distinction between faith and knowledge in *Strom.* V,1,2 may be compared to the two stages of Christian initiation mentioned in *Strom.* V,71,2 and described as ὁμολογία ("confession") and ἀνάλυσις, respectively (cf. below, 18). In the latter passage, ὁμολογία replaces the "cathartic mode" of initiation, viz. the purificatory rites (τὰ καθάρσια) in the Greek mysteries, which, according to *Strom.* V,70,7, correspond to "the bath" (τὸ λουτρόν) among "the barbarians," i.e. presumably Jews. This juxtaposition of (Greek) purification, (Jewish) bath and (Christian) confession probably indicates that ὁμολογία amounts to the baptismal confession in *Strom.* V,71,2; cf. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 242 (ad *Strom.* V,70,7) and 244.

[10] The reading ἐξαίρετος was first proposed by Stählin as a correction of the manuscript

the two is described as ἡ ἐκ μαθήσεως περιγινομένη. In order to answer this question we must decide to which kind of πίστις the pronoun αὐτῇ refers, as the referent of αὐτῇ obviously cannot be the subject of συναπαρτίζεται at the same time.[11] According to Le Boulluec, "αὐτῇ renvoie à la 'foi commune', et ἡ ἐκ μαθήσεως… reprend ἡ δὲ ἐξαίρετος."[12] However, it is grammatically more probable that αὐτῇ refers to a less distant antecedent, and it also makes better sense that the subject of συναπαρτίζεται should be a less perfect kind of πίστις. By μάθησις Clement probably means catechetic instruction.[13] For the relation between μάθησις and πίστις, see Clement, *Paed.* I,29,1 (πίστις… μαθήσεως τελειότης); I,30,2 (ἡ… κατήχησις εἰς πίστιν περιάγει); *Eclogae* 28,3 (οὐκ ἔστι πιστεῦσαι ἄνευ κατηχήσεως).[14]

> V,3,2/*SChr* 3,6-12: Εἰ γὰρ φύσει τις τὸν θεὸν ἐπίσταται, ὡς Βασιλείδης οἴεται, τὴν νόησιν τὴν ἐξαίρετον πίστιν ἅμα καὶ βασιλείαν καὶ <…> καλῶν, κτίσιν οὐσίας ἀξίαν τοῦ ποιήσαντος πλησίον ὑπάρχειν αὐτὴν ἑρμηνεύων, οὐσίαν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξουσίαν, καὶ φύσιν καὶ ὑπόστασιν, κτίσεως ἀνυπερθέτου κάλλος ἀδιόριστον, οὐχὶ δὲ ψυχῆς αὐτεξουσίου λογικὴν συγκατάθεσιν λέγει τὴν πίστιν.
>
> For if we know God by nature, as Basilides contends when he calls the excellent intellection faith as well as kingdom and <…> and interprets it as the creation of substance worthy of being near to the Creator, then he says that faith is essence

---

(Codex Laurentianus V 3) ἐξαιρέτως, which had been followed by all editions before 1906. Stählin's emendation was later confirmed by a quotation of this passage in Codex Laura B 113 from Athos, fol. 91^{v}, a rare witness of an independent textual tradition. The quotation was identified by Früchtel who used it for the reconstruction of Clement's text in the revised *GCS* edition published in 1960. Cf. Früchtel's introduction to the latter volume, VIII-IX.

11) The reading αὐτῇ ἡ… περιγινομένη, first printed in 1960, is preserved in codex Laura B 113 (see previous note). Codex Laurentianus V 3 and all editions before 1960 present the passage as follows: αὖ τῇ… περιγινομένῃ. Hence Stählin's translation (*BKV* 2/19, Bd. IV, 1937, 118): "Auf ihm baut sich der auserlesene, besondere Glaube auf und wird zusammen mit dem Gläubigen vollkommen gemacht und gelangt anderseits zusammen mit dem aus dem Lernen gewonnenen zur Vollendung…"

12) *SChr* 279, 22; cf. *SChr* 278, 27: "…la foi supérieure, édifiée sur la première, se perfectionne en même temps que le croyant, et c'est avec elle [scil. la foi commune], que, provenant de l'étude, elle atteint son achèvement…" Le Boulluec's interpretation is followed by G. Pini, *Clemente Alessandrino, Gli Stromati. Note di vera filosofia*, Milano 1985, 542; see also Osborn, *Clement*, 163.

13) Cf. P.Th. Camelot, *Foi et gnose*, Paris 1945, 106; L. Rizzerio, "Sulla nozione di «Fede» in Clemente Alessandrino," in: *Sandalion* 8-9, 1985-86, 159, footnote 40.

14) Cf. also *Strom.* II,25,1; V,13,1; 62,3. Two of these passages (*Paed.* I,29,1; *Strom.* V,13,1) are quoted by P.Th. Camelot, *Foi*, 106, in connection with *Strom.* V,3,2 (read according to Laurentianus, of course).

> rather than power, nature and substance, unlimited beauty of an incomparable creation, rather than a rational assent of a sovereign soul.

In this notoriously difficult passage, whose manuscript reading is corrupt at some point and whose syntactic structure is anacoluthic, the Basilidean concept of πίστις is discussed. Stählin accepted an emendation proposed by Eduard Schwartz and deleted the article before νόησιν in *GCS* 15, 327,20 (=*SChr* 3,7). According to this reading (retained by Früchtel in the main text), νόησιν and βασιλείαν were understood as predicates of τὴν ἐξαίρετον πίστιν.[15] The emendation is considered unnecessary by Le Boulluec who proposes that πίστιν ἅμα καὶ βασιλείαν should be read as predicates of τὴν νόησιν τὴν ἐξαίρετον, and so, unlike ten lines before (2,6/*SChr* 2,19, quoted above), the term ἐξαίρετος should qualify νόησις rather then πίστις.[16] Le Boulluec's solution is corroborated by W.A. Löhr, who points out that with Schwartz's reading ἅμα καὶ seems to bind πίστιν and βασιλείαν too closely together. Moreover, according to Löhr, it is plausible that the non-biblical term νόησις is defined by concepts of biblical origin πίστις and βασιλεία.[17]

The main argument in favour of Schwartz's emendation remains the coherence of Clement's exposition. Clement's theme, introduced in 1,1, is πίστις. Having distinguished between two kinds of πίστις in 2,4-3,1, Clement turns to the Basilidean material in order to differentiate his concept of πίστις from that of his opponent. This becomes apparent in the second part of the sentence (*SChr* 3,9-12), where he reduces his opponent's interpretation of πίστις to an absurd conclusion: "then he says that faith is essence rather than power, nature and substance… rather than a rational assent of a sovereign soul." This conclusion would hardly make sense if the

---

15) In the *GCS* edition, the beginning of the sentence is constructed as follows: εἰ γὰρ φύσει τις τὸν θεὸν ἐπίσταται, ὡς Βασιλείδης οἴεται, [τὴν] νόησιν τὴν ἐξαίρετον πίστιν ἅμα καὶ βασιλείαν κτλ. (as for the following, which is also construed differently from the *SChr* edition, see below, note 20). Stählin's interpretation of the text is clear from his translation (*BKV* II/19, Bd. IV, 1937, 119): "Denn wenn jemand durch seine Naturanlage Wissen von Gott besitzt, wie Basilides meint, der den Glauben der Auserlesenen ein Verstehen und ein Königsein… erklärt… " In a note to the 1960 *GCS* edition, Früchtel suggests, "versuchsweise," yet a different solution: <ἐκλεκ>τὴν νόησιν (*Clemens Alexandrinus*, vol. II, 533, note to page 327,20ff.). The first editor to present a (rather extensive) emendation of the passage was J. Potter in a footnote to his 1715 edition (cf. Migne, *PG* IX, 12, footnote 10).

16) *SChr* 279, 23.

17) Löhr, *Basilides*, 175.

only predicate in the *oratio obliqua* on which it can be based, viz. "the creation of essence," were in fact related to νόησις rather then πίστις.[18]

Even if we accept Schwartz's conjecture, we might nonetheless do justice to Löhr's observation that ἅμα καὶ binds πίστιν and βασιλείαν closely together. Perhaps instead the whole syntagma τὴν ἐξαίρετον πίστιν ἅμα καὶ βασιλείαν should be understood as a subject. It might refer to the specific kind of πίστις discussed immediately before our passage (2,6-3,1), where Clement compares it to "a mustard seed" (κόκκος σινάπεως: 3,1/*SChr* 3,3). This is obviously an allusion to the metaphor of faith in Matthew 17:20 (ἐὰν ἔχητε πίστιν ὡς κόκκον σινάπεως κτλ.), but also (as lines *SChr* 3,4-5 indicate) to Matt 13:31-32 parr., where "the mustard seed" is a symbol of "the kingdom of heaven" (ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν). It strikes me as plausible that πίστις ὡς κόκκος σινάπεως mentioned in 3,1 remains the subject of the next sentence (3,2) in the form of ἡ ἐξαίρετος πίστις ἅμα καὶ βασιλεία, since the identification of πίστις as βασιλεία is already implied in 3,1. If so, it might be possible to retain Schwartz's conjecture and translate the first part of the sentence as follows: "For if we know God by nature, as Basilides contends when he calls the excellent faith as well as kingdom 'intellection'…"[19]

Assuming that this is a tenable interpretation of the beginning of the sentence, I follow the reading of the remaining part according to the

---

[18] It is interesting that according to Clement the Basilideans did in fact describe faith as "assent" (συγκατάθεσις) (*Strom*. II,27,2; cf. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 24-25; Löhr, *Basilides*, 59-61; 178). In *Strom*. V,3,2/*SChr* 3,11-12 Clement seems the make the point that Basilides is inconsistent with his own teaching. Cf. a similar (most probably unfair) charge against Valentinus in *Strom.* II,115,1-2.

[19] If there is a lacuna after καὶ in 3,2/*SChr* 3,8, as first suggested by Früchtel in his notes to the 1960 *GCS* edition (*Clemens Alexandrinus*, vol. II, 533, note to page 327,20ff.), the role of the missing part in the syntax of the sentence remains obscure. In a note to his Italian translation of this passage (unlike, surprisingly, in the translation itself), G. Pini reverses the order of καὶ and καλῶν (*Clemente Alessandrino, Gli Stromati*, 894, note to V,3,2). This solution is already implied by G. Hervetus, the author of the first Latin translation published in 1551 (and accepted, with modifications, by editors until the 19th century), who translates the passage as follows: *Si quis enim Deum scit natura, ut existimat Basilides, intelligentiam eximiam fidem simul et regnum vocans, et creaturam* etc. Cf. also A. Hilgenfeld, *Die Ketzergeschichte des Urchristentums*, Leipzig, 1884, 226, footnote 371. But, as Le Boulluec notes, "[i]l paraît difficile de supposer une interversion de καλῶν et de καὶ dans la transmission du texte" (*SChr* 279, 24). Le Boulluec's suggestion that κάλλος may have been omitted after καὶ is attractive. The concept of faith as beauty might be compared with Clement's own idea of τὸ ὄντως καλὸν which is "kindled" (ἀναζωπυρούμενον) by the divine Word within the soul (*Protr.* 117,2).

SChr edition:[20] according to Clement, Basilides calls the excellent faith, as well as kingdom, νόησις and "interprets it as the creation of substance worthy of being near to the Creator" (κτίσιν οὐσίας ἀξίαν τοῦ ποιήσαντος πλησίον ὑπάρχειν αὐτὴν ἑρμηνεύων).[21] The transition from Clement's discussion of faith in 3,1 to his report on Basilides in 3,2 would be especially smooth if it could be demonstrated that Basilides based his exposition of

---

20) This part of the sentence is also difficult. In the main text, Früchtel retains the presentation of Stählin: … ἐξαίρετον πίστιν ἅμα καὶ βασιλείαν καὶ καλῶν κτίσιν, †οὐσίας ἀξίαν τοῦ ποιήσαντος πλησίον ὑπάρχειν αὐτήν, ἑρμηνεύων κτλ. The syntactic difficulty of this reading is indicated by Stählin's crux and his note to the 1937 *BKV* translation (Bd. IV, 119, footnote 5). Le Boulluec adopts the punctuation proposed by Früchtel in a note to 1960 *GCS* edition (533, note to page 327,20ff.); cf. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 24.

21) I think it is more probable that Basilides tends to interpret biblical terms (such as πίστις) with philosophical ones (such as νόησις or οὐσία), rather then *vice versa*, as Löhr, *Basilides*, 175, contends. The expression κτίσις οὐσίας might be a reflection of the Platonic account of the creation of the immortal part of the human soul in *Timaeus* 41c6-d1; 41d4-7. Cf. *Strom*. IV,88,3, about the Basilidean concept of πρόνοια which "was sowed into the essences by the god of the universe at the same time when the essences were created" (ἐγκατεσπάρη [scil. ἡ πρόνοια] ταῖς οὐσίαις σὺν καὶ τῇ τῶν οὐσιῶν γενέσει πρὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν ὅλων). This immanent πρόνοια might be compared with the "the laws of destiny" (οἱ εἱμαρμένοι νόμοι) that, according to *Timaeus*, god announced to the immortal souls before sowing them to the earth, to the moon and all the remaining "instruments of time" (41e2-42d5). Here we may recall that Basilideans seem to have developed their concept of faith in a cosmological framework. Cf. *Strom*. II,10,3: ἔτι φασὶν οἱ ἀπὸ Βασιλείδου πίστιν ἅμα καὶ ἐκλογὴν οἰκείαν εἶναι καθ' ἕκαστον διάστημα, κατ' ἐπακολούθημα δ' αὖ τῆς ἐκλογῆς τῆς ὑπερκοσμίου τὴν κοσμικὴν ἁπάσης φύσεως συνέπεσθαι πίστιν ("The followers of Basilides also say that for each interval, there is an appropriate faith as well as election, and, again, that the mundane faith of every nature follows in consequence of a supramundane election"). This is admittedly a difficult fragment, but it might be, to some extent, interpreted against the background of *Timaeus* 41d8-e1, 42b3-5, 42d4-5, and perhaps—as regards the idea of "the following"—such passages as Plato, *Phaedrus* 247a4-7, 248c2-249c4, 250b7-8. The word διάστημα might refer to the intervals between the radii of planetary orbits (cf. Plato, *Timaeus* 36d2-3 and Alcinous, *Did*. 170,9-11; ps. Aristotle, *De mundo* 399a4-6; Alexander, *In Arist. Met.* 40,3-9), or perhaps to divisions of the zodiac (cf. Ptolemaeus, *Tetrabiblos* I,22,3). It is conceivable (though, of course, by no means certain) that the "supramundane election" in *Strom*. II,10,3 imitates the act of "sowing" of the immortal souls to the heavenly bodies in the *Timaeus*. Inspired by Platonic mythology, Basilideans may have understood faith as the actualization of an immortal potency of the soul which somehow corresponds to the place of its origin, i.e., to the διάστημα of its heavenly abode. In any case, it is possible that apart from understanding faith as the actualization of a cognitive potency (cf. *Strom.* II,10,1 where the act is described as κατάληψις νοητική), Basilideans used the same term (i.e., πίστις) to designate the cognitive potency itself: hence Clement's complaints in *Strom*. V,3,2.

πίστις on the same biblical passages on which Clement's interpretation of "the excellent faith" was also based. One could imagine, for example, that he explained the κόκκος σινάπεως in Matt 17:20 and 13:31-32 parr. as a reference to some selectively distributed cognitive disposition analogous to the Valentinian spiritual seed.[22] Although Clement does in fact indicate that Basilides' concept of πίστις is an interpretation (ἑρμηνεύων in *SChr* 3,9), he nevertheless does not claim that it is an interpretation of the same biblical passages to which Clement himself alludes in *Strom.* V,3,1, and so this possibility of explanation remains conjectural.

> V,6,3/*SChr* 6,15-16: ὁ δὲ μεταδοὺς ἡμῖν τοῦ εἶναί τε καὶ ζῆν μεταδέδωκεν καὶ τοῦ λόγου, λογικῶς τε ἅμα καὶ εὖ ζῆν ἐθέλων ἡμᾶς.
>
> He who gave us a share in being and living also gave us a share in *logos*, as he wanted us to live both rationally and well.

This passage is arguably the best available evidence of the employment of the triad being–life–thinking before Plotinus. It seems to have escaped the attention of P. Hadot, who could have quoted it in support of his hypothesis based mainly on Augustine, *De civitate Dei* VIII,4, according to which the triad was used in Middle Platonist textbooks in connection with three constitutive elements of education described (in varying order) as nature, exercise and doctrine.[23] It is unclear in what way (if any) Clement distinguishes between εἶναι and ζῆν. His main concern is the transition from "living" to "living well," which is only possible through participation in λόγος.[24] But at least in his source the distinction may have been based on

---

[22] See previous note. For the Valentinian interpretation of Matt 13:31-32 parr., see Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I,13,2. Cf. also Clement's appropriation of the Valentinian concept of the spiritual seed in *Excerpta* 1,3.

[23] P. Hadot, "*Être, vie, pensée chez Plotin et avant Plotin*," in: *Les sources de Plotin*, Fondation Hardt: Vandoeuvres-Genève, 1960, 122-130. The three elements of education are also known to Clement; cf. *Strom*. VI,96,3: Πάντες μὲν οὖν, ὡς ἔφην, πρὸς ἀρετῆς κτῆσιν πεφύκασιν, ἀλλ' ὃ μὲν μᾶλλον, ὃ δ' ἧττον πρόσεισι τῇ τε μαθήσει τῇ τε ἀσκήσει κτλ.

[24] Cf. Clement, *Protr.* 7,1: αἴτιος γοῦν ὁ λόγος, ὁ Χριστός, καὶ τοῦ εἶναι πάλαι ἡμᾶς… καὶ τοῦ εὖ εἶναι. Ibid. 7,3: καὶ τὸ ζῆν ἐν ἀρχῇ μετὰ τοῦ πλάσαι παρασχὼν ὡς δημιουργός, τὸ εὖ ζῆν ἐδίδαξεν ἐπιφανεὶς ὡς διδάσκαλος κτλ. The polarity ζῆν—εὖ ζῆν is a philosophical commonplace; cf. Plato, *Crito* 48b5-6; Aristotle, *Pol.* I, 1252b29-30; Seneca, *Ep.* 90,1; Philo of Alexandria, *Opif.* 77; Clement, *Strom*. VI,65,6; 100,2. Clement occasionally adduces a third level, τὸ ἀεὶ ζῆν. Cf. *Protr*. 7,1.3; *Paed*. I,103,2; *Strom.* IV,18,3.

the difference between the points of view of the natural and the ethical division of philosophy.[25]

> V,8,6/*SChr* 8,20-22 (exegesis of Genesis 15:5): ὕστερον δὲ ἀναβλέψας [scil. Ἀβρὰμ] εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, εἴτε τὸν υἱὸν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἰδών, ὡς ἐξηγοῦνταί τινες, εἴτε ἄγγελον ἔνδοξον εἴτε καὶ ἄλλως ἐπιγνοὺς θεὸν κρείττονα τῆς ποιήσεως καὶ πάσης τῆς ἐν αὐτῇ τάξεως, προσλαμβάνει τὸ ἄλφα κτλ.
>
> But later he [i.e., Abram] looked up into heaven and either because he saw the Son in his spirit, as some interpret [the passage], or a glorious angel, or in some other manner recognized that God is greater than the creation and all its order, he received the alpha…

As noticed by S. Krauss in 1893,[26] Clement's interpretation of the "object" of Abram's vision as ἄγγελος ἔνδοξος probably reflects Jewish haggadic tradition. In addition to *Genesis Rabba* 44, where, in the commentary of Genesis 15:6f., Michael is described as Abraham's saviour (a parallel mentioned by Krauss),[27] we may recall the description of angel Iaoel in the *Apocalypse of Abraham* 10:3-4,8 (exegesis of Gen 15), according to which he is a mediator of "the ineffable name" who is sent to Abraham "in the likeness of a man" (compare the description of "the glory of the Lord" in Ezekiel 1:26).[28]

> V,18,3/*SChr* 18,8: ἐνέχυρον γὰρ τῆς ἀληθείας τὴν ἀπόδειξιν ἀπαιτοῦσιν οἱ πολλοὶ οὐκ ἀρκούμενοι ψιλῇ τῇ ἐκ πίστεως σωτηρίᾳ.
>
> For the common people are not satisfied with mere salvation by faith, but require proof as a pledge of truth.

---

25) Cf. Augustin, *De civ. Dei*, VIII,4, about a Platonist theory which distinguishes in God *et causa subsistendi et ratio intellegendi et ordo vivendi*. "Of these three," Augustine continues, "the first is assumed to belong to the natural, the second to the logical and the third to the moral subdivision of philosophy." (transl. D.S. Wiesen). Cf. Hadot, *Être*, 123-125.130. A similar distinction is made by Clement in *Strom*. IV,162,5: ᾗ μὲν οὖν ἐστιν οὐσία [scil. ὁ θεός], ἀρχὴ τοῦ φυσικοῦ τόπου· καθ' ὅσον ἐστὶν τἀγαθόν, τοῦ ἠθικοῦ· ᾗ δ' αὖ ἐστι νοῦς, τοῦ λογικοῦ καὶ κριτικοῦ τόπου.

26) "The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers," in: *Jewish Quarterly Review* 5, 1893, 137-138.

27) Cf. Stählin, in a note to the *GCS* edition (*Clemens Alexandrinus*, vol. II, 331); J.W. Trigg, "Receiving the Alpha: Negative Theology in Clement of Alexandria and its Possible Implications," in: *Studia Patristica* 31, 1997, 541.

28) I follow the translation of R. Rubinkiewicz and H.G. Lunt, in: J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. I, New York 1983, 693f.

The expression ψιλὴ σωτηρία is probably an allusion to the concept of ψιλὴ πίστις, a religious attitude of "simple" Christians and one that Clement regards as sufficient for salvation.[29] For Clement, this attitude, while inferior to true knowledge, is superior to the type of enquiry he ascribes to οἱ πολλοί, namely to those who think that every truth must be based on ἀπόδειξις. Clement's polemic could echo Aristotle's criticism of researchers who demand the proof even of the first premise of a proof, a demand that Aristotle ascribes to their lack of education (ἀπαιδευσία).[30] Clement's opponents may include those he calls οἱ νεώτεροι τῶν παρ' Ἕλλησι φιλοσόφων in the eighth book of *Stromata*, where they can plausibly be identified as the Pyrrhonian skeptics.[31] See also *Strom.* II,9,6; 24,2-3.[32]

> V,23,2-24,2/*SChr* 23,9-24,9: {23,2}Λέγει δὲ καὶ διὰ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου τὸ πνεῦμα· «Δώσω σοι θησαυροὺς σκοτεινοὺς ἀποκρύφους.» (Isa 45:3) Θησαυροὶ δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πλοῦτος ἀνεκλιπὴς ἡ δυσθήρατός ἐστι σοφία.

---

[29] The concept of ψιλὴ πίστις was probably first developed by the Valentinians (cf. Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I,6,2; Clement, *Strom.* II,10,2). Despite his own criticism of this attitude (cf. *Strom.* I,43,1; V,53,3; VI,131,3), Clement insists (not unlike the Valentinians themselves) that it is sufficient for salvation (cf. *Strom.* V,2,5; 9,2; VI,109,2); cf. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 20-21.

[30] Cf. Aristotle, *Metaph.* IV, 1011a8-13; 1006a5-8.

[31] Cf. *Strom.* VIII,1,2; 15-16.

[32] In *Strom.* II,9,6, after saying that "the voice of God" which presented us with the divine Scriptures is an "incontrovertible proof" (ἀπόδειξις ἀναντίρρητος), Clement infers from this description that faith (i.e., the faith of those who came to believe the Scriptures) "is no longer fortified by a proof" (οὐκέτ' οὖν πίστις γίνεται δι' ἀποδείξεως ὠχυρωμένη). This interpretation of the sentence (based on its analysis as a periphrastic form of γίγνομαι with a participle) is not the only possibility available (cf. Stählin, *BKV* II/19, Bd. III, 156), but it is supported by the subsequent quotation from *John* 20:29: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Cf. also the translation of Mondésert, *SChr* 38, 39; Pini, *Clemente Alessandrino, Gli Stromati*, 236. Clement's idea seems to be that faith based on the voice of God does not require additional evidence in order to be proved. It is precisely this requirement that is put forward by οἱ πολλοί mentioned in *Strom.* V,18,3. I think that these parallels justify Stählin's correction of the manuscript reading in *Strom.* II,24,2: δέδεικται δὲ τῆς τῶν ὅλων ἀρχῆς ἐπιστήμη πιστή [Stählin: πίστις], ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπόδειξις εἶναι. For Clement, the knowledge of the first principle has the character of πίστις, not ἀπόδειξις (i.e., being based on "the voice of God," it is, in a sense, self-evident). Stählin's emendation (accepted by Mondésert and Pini) was rejected by Früchtel. For Clement's concept of πίστις, see the excellent analysis of U. Schneider, *Theologie als christliche Philosophie: Zur Bedeutung der biblischen Botschaft im Denken des Clemens von Alexandria*, de Gruyter: Berlin—New York 1999, 281-298, esp. 284-291.

{24,1}Ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ παρὰ τούτων τῶν προφητῶν τὴν θεολογίαν δεδιδαγμένοι ποιηταὶ δι' ὑπονοίας πολλὰ φιλοσοφοῦσι, τὸν Ὀρφέα λέγω, τὸν Λίνον, τὸν Μουσαῖον, τὸν Ὅμηρον καὶ Ἡσίοδον καὶ τοὺς ταύτῃ σοφούς. {24,2a} Παραπέτασμα δὲ αὐτοῖς πρὸς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἡ ποιητικὴ ψυχαγωγία· {24,2b}ὄνειροί τε καὶ σύμβολα ἀφανέστερα πάντα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὐ φθόνῳ (οὐ γὰρ θέμις ἐμπαθῆ νοεῖν τὸν θεόν), ἀλλ' ὅπως εἰς τὴν τῶν αἰνιγμάτων ἔννοιαν ἡ ζήτησις παρεισδύουσα ἐπὶ τὴν εὕρεσιν τῆς ἀληθείας ἀναδράμῃ.

{23,2}However, the Spirit through Isaiah the prophet also says: "I will give you dark and hidden treasures." Such is the wisdom hard to capture: treasures of God, unfailing riches.

{24,1}Well, the poets who were educated in theology by these prophets often philosophize in a cryptic manner too. I mean Orpheus, Linus, Musaius, Homer, Hesiod and sages of this sort. {24,2a}But they use the captivating charm of their poetry as a covering against the multitude. {24,2b}As for dream symbols, the fact that none of them are too clear to human beings is not due to jealousy (it is forbidden to think that God succumbs to passions). Rather, [they are obscure] in order that enquiry, while penetrating into the meaning of the riddles, ascends to the discovery of truth.

This passage is a part of a section in which the use of the symbolic genre in various cultures is discussed. It is preceded by exegetical remarks on the sayings of the "Seven Sages." It can be divided into three thematic units (23,2; 24,1-24,2a; 24,2b) whose connecting link is not immediately clear, and, as I will argue, it might be further obfuscated by the way the text is presented in modern editions. In the third unit, 24,2b, Clement says that the reason why ὄνειροί τε καὶ σύμβολα are ἀφανέστερα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις must not be ascribed to God's φθόνος. Rather, their obscurity is meant to provoke enquiry of their hidden meaning that might eventually lead to the discovery of truth. This argument implies that ὄνειροί τε καὶ σύμβολα are means by which God communicates with human beings. It is preceded by two sentences (24,1-24,2a) in which the role of symbols is quite different, viz. to hide some philosophical doctrines from the multitude. This is a strategy of ancient poets (Orpheus, Linus etc.) whose ποιητικὴ ψυχαγωγία is described as παραπέτασμα πρὸς τοὺς πολλοὺς. Clement probably implies that their cryptic manner of teaching is influenced by Hebrew prophets from whom ancient poets have learned their theology.[33] This discussion is preceded by a quotation from Isaiah 45:3 and a brief commentary in which "the dark and hidden treasures" given by God are identified with God's wisdom which is "hard to capture" (23,2).

33) Cf. *Strom*. II,1,2.

The points that the author makes in 24,2a and 24,2b seem to be linked by the idea of a contrast between the motivation of the poets, on the one hand, and God, on the other, for the employment of the symbolic genre. By emphasizing that ὄνειροί τε καὶ σύμβολα given by God are unclear for other reasons than jealousy (24,2b), Clement seems to contrast God's educational motives with the desire of ancient poets to hide the truth from the multitude (24,2a). What makes this connecting link obscure is the fact that the concept of symbol as a means of divine communication is not introduced, but merely implied in 24,2b, as though it had been established before. This might be explained if we interpret the concept of symbol in 24,2b as a development of the motif of "the dark and hidden treasures" of God, introduced in 23,2. I think it is possible that after the discussion of the sayings of the Seven Sages (22-23,1) a new theme is launched in 23,2, namely the idea of symbol as a means of divine communication.[34] After a brief digression on the cryptic strategy of ancient poets (mentioned in order to highlight the educational strategy of God), the theme is further developed in 24,2b and the following, up to the end of chapter four. If this interpretation is correct, it would follow that 24,1 should not be marked as a beginning of a new paragraph (which might start at 23,2 instead), as it has been by all editors since Klotz.

Presumably, ὄνειροί τε καὶ σύμβολα is to be read as hendiadys in the sense of "dream symbols." Clement indicates that symbolic dreams (not "dreams and symbols" in general) are of divine origin. This view is supported by both Homer and the Bible.[35] For Clement, it seems to be an example of how God gives his "dark and hidden treasures."[36] The reason why God reveals wisdom in an obscure manner ("in order that enquiry, while penetrating into the meaning of the riddles, ascends to the discovery

---

34) In the passage immediately preceding the quotation from Isa 45:3, in the context of a discussion of various meanings of the maxim γνῶθι σαυτόν, Clement notes that those who describe themselves as famous or rich are of no account when other eminent things of life are compared with it. Later he interprets the maxim as an invitation to explore "what you were born for, whose image you are, what is your essence, what is creation, what is assimilation to the divine, and other similar questions." (23,1). My interpretation of 23,2 as an introduction of a new concept of symbol does not exclude the possibility, suggested by Le Boulluec (*SChr* 279, 108-109), that 23,2 echoes the preceding discussion of the Delphic maxim.

35) Cf. Homer, *Ilias* I,63; *Dan* 2:1-45.

36) Another, more important example, namely the symbolic language of the Scriptures, is introduced in 25,1.

of truth") is echoed in *Strom*. V,56,2 in connection with the symbolical language of Scriptures: "in order that we reach up to the truth" (ἕνεκεν… τοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀνατετάσθαι). See also *Strom.* VI,126,1. A similar explanation of the same problem is expressed by Plutarch in the context of the Delphic cult.[37]

> V,38,6-7/*SChr* 38,20-26 (exegesis of Exodus 28:36): Ὥσπερ δὲ ὁ κύριος ὑπεράνω τοῦ κόσμου παντός, μᾶλλον δὲ ἐπέκεινα τοῦ νοητοῦ, οὕτως καὶ τὸ ἐν τῷ πετάλῳ ἔγγραπτον ὄνομα «ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας» (cf. Eph 1:21) εἶναι ἠξίωται, ἔγγραπτον δὲ διά τε τὰς ἐντολὰς τὰς ἐγγράφους διά τε τὴν αἰσθητὴν παρουσίαν. ὄνομα δὲ εἴρηται θεοῦ, ἐπεί, ὡς βλέπει τοῦ πατρὸς τὴν ἀγαθότητα, ὁ υἱὸς ἐνεργεῖ κτλ.
>
> Just as the Lord is above the whole world, and even beyond the intelligible one, so the name that is inscribed in the plate [i.e., the gold plate on the mitre of the High Priest] has been found worthy to be "above all rule and authority." It is "inscribed" with reference to the inscribed commandments as well as to the sensuously perceptible presence. It is called the name of God, because the Son acts as he sees the goodness of the Father…

In *Strom*. V,34,5, in the context of the exegesis of Exodus 28:36f., Clement identifies the name inscribed in the gold plate on the High Priest's mitre as "the mystical name with four letters" (τὸ τετράγραμμον ὄνομα τὸ μυστικόν), that is, as the name of God.[38] In 38,6-7 (quoted above), he seems to interpret the name of God as the Son.[39] At the same time, Clement compares the elevation of the name (that is, the Son) "above all rule and authority" (compare Eph 1:21) to the way that "the Lord is above the whole world,

---

37) Cf. Plutarch, *De E*, 384e-f; 385c (LCL, F.C. Babbitt): "It seems that our beloved Apollo finds a remedy and a solution for the problems connected with our life by the oracular responses which he gives to those who consult him; but the problems connected with our power to reason it seems that he himself launches and propounds to him who is by nature inclined to the love of knowledge, thus creating in the soul a craving that leads onward to the truth (τὰς δὲ περὶ τὸν λόγον [scil. ἀπορίας] αὐτὸς ἐνιέναι καὶ προβάλλειν τῷ φύσει φιλοσόφῳ τῆς ψυχῆς ὄρεξιν ἐμποιῶν ἀγωγὸν ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν). […] Since… inquiry (τὸ ζητεῖν) is the beginning of philosophy, and wonder and uncertainty the beginning of inquiry, it seems only natural that the greater part of what concerns the god should be concealed in riddles (αἰνίγμασι κατακεκρύφθαι), and should call for some account (λόγον τινὰ ποθοῦντα) of the wherefore and an explanation of its cause." Cf. also Maximus of Tyre, *Dial.* IV,6a6-b1 (Hobein 46,14-15). Today we might paraphrase this explanation by the Ricoeurian formula "le symbol donne à penser."

38) Cf. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 141.

39) Cf. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 161. Cf. also *Strom*. V, 136,3.

and even beyond the intelligible one." Following the interpretation of J. Pépin, Le Boulluec identifies "the Lord" with the Son, which leads him to the conclusion that in this passage the Son transcends the intelligible realm.[40] Yet such a conclusion is surprising, since, to my knowledge, there is no other statement in Clement's writings to this effect.[41] However, the premise that "the Lord" is the Son may not be correct. The idea that the Lord transcends the sensible and the intelligible realms echoes motifs developed in Clement's preceding interpretations of the High Priest. In 37,5-38,2, Clement explains the head of the High Priest as a symbol of Christ who is "the head of the church" (37,5; cf. Eph 5:23), as well as "the head of all things" (ἡ κεφαλὴ τῶν πάντων) through whom the world was created and to whom it is subjected.[42] But above the head, there is a golden

---

[40] Cf. J. Pépin, "La vraie dialectique selon Clément d'Alexandrie," in: J. Fontaine–C. Kannengiesser (eds.), *Epektasis. Mélanges patristiques offerts au cardinal Jean Daniélou*, Beauchesne: Paris 1972, 382; Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 161. Pépin's reading is also accepted by E. Osborn, *Clement of Alexandria*, Cambridge 2005, 65-66.

[41] J. Pépin refers to the following passages in support of his thesis: *Strom.* II,5,1-3; VI,68,1; VII,2,2; 17,2. However, as far as I can see, the idea that the Son transcends the intelligible realm is not indicated in any of them. Perhaps the most interesting example is *Strom.* VI,68,1: after saying that true science (unlike the "partial" wisdom of Greek philosophy) is concerned with "things intelligible and even more spiritual than that" (τὰ νοητὰ καὶ ἔτι τούτων τὰ πνευματικώτερα), Clement specifies that the Teacher (i.e., Christ) has revealed to the legitimate heirs of the κυριακὴ υἱοθεσία realities described as ἅγια ἁγίων καὶ ἔτι τούτων κατ' ἐπανάβασιν τὰ ἁγιώτερα. This passage does seem to demonstrate that, according to Clement, the Son is a mediator of realities beyond the intelligible realm. But this is arguably different from a doctrine that the Son himself transcends that realm. In *Strom.* VII,2,2, Clement famously describes the Son as by origin "the oldest" being among the intelligible things (ἐν… τοῖς νοητοῖς τὸ πρεσβύτατον ἐν γενέσει), "the beginning and the first fruit of existing things, independent of time and without beginning [in time]" (ἡ ἄχρονος ἄναρχος ἀρχή τε καὶ ἀπαρχὴ τῶν ὄντων), from whom it is possible to learn about "the cause beyond" (τὸ ἐπέκεινα αἴτιον), i.e., the Father. For the Platonist background of this description cf. J. Whittaker, ΕΠΕΚΕΙΝΑ ΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΟΥΣΙΑΣ, *VigChr* 23, 1969, 91-104 (the passage is quoted on p. 93). Referring to this passage, Le Boulluec acknowledges that, according to Clement, the Son does not transcend the intellect (*SChr* 279, 161). But this conclusion seems hard to reconcile with the notion that, in Clement's view, the Son "is beyond the intelligible [world]" (ἐπέκεινα τοῦ νοητοῦ [scil. κόσμου]), defended by Le Boulluec on the basis of *Strom.* V,38,6.

[42] Strom. V,38,2: Ναὶ μὴν τὸ μὲν περιστήθιον… ἔστιν οὐρανοῦ εἰκὼν τοῦ λόγῳ γενομένου, τοῦ ὑποκειμένου τῇ κεφαλῇ τῶν πάντων τῷ Χριστῷ <καὶ> κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ὡσαύτως κινουμένου ("Indeed, the breastband [of the High Priest]… is an image of heaven created through *logos*, subjected to Christ, the head of all things, and moving according to the same [rules] and in like manner"). The description of the movement of οὐρανός with a

mitre which "demonstrates the royal power of the Lord" (τὴν ἐξουσίαν μηνύει τὴν βασιλικὴν τοῦ κυρίου). If "the head" is the Saviour, says Clement, "the mitre above it is a sign of the most authoritative principle" (σημεῖον γοῦν ἡγεμονικωτάτης ἀρχῆς ὁ πῖλος ὁ ὑπὲρ αὐτήν), that is, of the Father.[43] I think it is likely that in the attribution of the "royal power" to "the Lord," the word "Lord," though it might include a reference to the Saviour (who is called ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν a few lines later),[44] primarily designates the Father, since it is, strictly speaking, the latter's royal power that the mitre symbolizes.[45] If this is a plausible interpretation, it may be argued that in *Strom*. V,38,6, the word ὁ κύριος also includes a reference to the Father, especially in so far as it is stated that the Lord is beyond the intelligible world.

Apart from the premise that "the Lord" is the Son, Pépin's interpretation of *Strom*. V,38,6 rests on the assumption that in the part according to which the inscribed name "has been found worthy to be above all rule and authority," the expression "all rule and authority" (πάσα ἀρχὴ καὶ ἐξουσία) refers to the intelligible forms.[46] But this assumption is contestable, too. In a passage of the first book of *Stromata*, which is the starting point of Pépin's interpretation, Clement describes the dialectical method of enquiry as a sort of heavenly ascent in the course of which "the true dialectic, by inspecting things and examining powers and authorities (τὰς δυνάμεις καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας δοκιμάζουσα), ascends to the most excellent essence of all (ὑπεξαναβαίνει ἐπὶ τὴν πάντων κρατίστην οὐσίαν) and ventures [to reach] beyond that (τολμᾷ τε ἐπέκεινα), up to God of the universe."[47] Here, δυνάμεις καὶ ἐξουσίαι seem to correspond to πάσα ἀρχὴ καὶ ἐξουσία in

---

phrase normally applied to intelligible forms in Platonism seems to be based on Plato, *Polit.* 269d5-e4.

43) *Strom.* V,37,5-38,1.

44) *Strom.* V,38,1; Stählin refers to Rom 15,6; 2 Cor 11:31.

45) In his index (*Clemens Alexandrinus*, vol. IV, *GCS* 39, Berlin 1985², 528), Stählin notes that in Clement's writings the word κύριος may refer to the Father as well as to the Son, often without a distinction. My understanding of *Strom*. V,37,5 differs from that of Kovacs, "Concealment," 424, footnote 46, who suggests that in the latter passage, "κύριος appears to refer to the Son, not the Father," as it does in *Strom*. V,34,7 and VII,6,2-7,6. But Kovacs does not explain how this interpretation tallies with Clement's description according to which, as Kovacs paraphrases it, "the 'royal authority' of the Lord… rests on the Savior" (ibid. 424).

46) Pépin, "La vraie dialectique," 381-382; the interpretation is adopted by Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 161.

47) *Strom.* I,177,1.

Strom. V,38,6. However, it is difficult to believe that Clement regards these powers as equivalent to the Platonic forms.[48] The true dialectic subjects τὰς δυνάμεις καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας to an examination (δοκιμάζουσα) in order to ascend ἐπὶ τὴν πάντων κρατίστην οὐσίαν and beyond. As Clement explains a few lines later, in the course of this examination, true dialecticians are expected to keep what is good and to reject the rest (τὰ μὲν ἀποδοκιμάζοντες, τὸ δὲ καλὸν κατέχοντες).[49] If there is an equivalent to the Platonic forms involved in this process, it must be the result of such examination, ἕκαστον τῶν ὄντων καθαρὸν οἷον ἔστι, as Clement puts it (I,177,3), rather than the objects examined.[50] This is not to deny that there might be a religious equivalent to intelligible forms in Clement's writings, but a better candidate for this status would be those eminent powers called οἱ πρωτόκτιστοι ἄγγελοι.[51] Whatever is their role in the hierarchy of powers, δυνάμεις καὶ

---

48) Cf. the references in footnote 46.

49) *Strom.* I,177,2; cf. 1Te 5:21.

50) Clement's description is probably an allusion to 1 John 4:1 (NRSV, slightly modified): "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but examine the spirits (δοκιμάζετε τὰ πνεύματα) to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone into the world." In 1Cor 15:24, πᾶσα ἀρχὴ καὶ πᾶσα ἐξουσία καὶ δύναμις are obviously the rejected powers. For the New Testament background of Clement's description cf. P. Nautin, "Notes sur le Stromate I de Clément d'Alexandrie," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 47, 1952, 631; D. Wyrwa, *Die christliche Platonaneignung*, 128-129.

51) The correspondence between the religious concept of οἱ πρωτόκτιστοι ἄγγελοι and the philosophical concept of intelligible forms is, in my view, most evident in *Excerpta* 10,3 (a passage usually attributed to Clement):… οἱ δὲ πρωτόκτιστοι, εἰ καὶ ἀριθμῷ διάφοροι καὶ ὁ καθ' ἕκαστον περιώρισται καὶ περιγέγραπται, ἀλλ' ἡ ὁμοιότης τῶν πραγμάτων ἑνότητα καὶ ἰσότητα καὶ ὁμοιότητα ἐνδείκνυται ("And as regards the first-created [angels], they are, admittedly, numerically different and each of them is individually defined and circumscribed, yet the similarity of things demonstrates [their] unity, equality and similarity"). Cf. Plotinus, *Enn*. VI,2,21, on the plurality of forms in the intellect: ἀριθμὸν δὴ πάντως ἔχει [scil. νοῦς] ἐν τούτοις οἷς ὁρᾷ, καὶ ἔστι δὲ ἓν καὶ πολλά, καὶ ταῦτα δὲ δυνάμεις κτλ. ("It [i.e., the intellect] certainly has number in the things which it sees, and it is one and many, and the many are its powers…" [translated by A.H. Armstrong]). The *protoctists* probably correspond to powers described as δυνάμεις τοῦ πνεύματος in *Strom*. IV,156,1: πᾶσαι δὲ αἱ δυνάμεις τοῦ πνεύματος συλλήβδην μὲν ἕν τι πρᾶγμα γενόμεναι συντελοῦσιν εἰς τὸ αὐτό, τὸν υἱόν κτλ. ("All the powers of the Spirit, when together they become one thing, contribute to the same [being], the Son…"). Cf. *Excerpta* 11,4: καὶ δύναμιν μὲν ἰδίαν ἔχει ἕκαστον τῶν πνευματικῶν καὶ ἰδίαν οἰκονομίαν· καθὸ δὲ ὁμοῦ τε ἐγένοντο καὶ τὸ ἐντελὲς ἀπειλήφασιν οἱ πρωτόκτιστοι, κοινὴν τὴν λειτουργίαν καὶ ἀμέριστον ("And each spiritual [being] has its special power and special dispensation. On the other hand, since the first created [angels] came to being together and have been endowed with perfection, their liturgy is common and undivided"). Cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* V,9,6: ὁ νοῦς ἐστιν

ἐξουσίαι in *Strom*. I,177,1 are certainly of a less refined sort, and the same is probably true of πάσα ἀρχὴ καὶ ἐξουσία in V,38,6.[52]

As Stählin notes in his apparatus, Clement's description of the activity of the Son "as he sees the goodness of the Father" (ὡς βλέπει τοῦ πατρὸς τὴν ἀγαθότητα, ὁ υἱὸς ἐνεργεῖ) alludes to John 5:19: οὐ δύναται ὁ υἱὸς ποιεῖν ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ οὐδὲν ἐὰν μή τι βλέπῃ τὸν πατέρα ποιοῦντα ("... the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing"). Clement replaces the verb ποιεῖν by ἐνεργεῖν, possibly hinting to the Aristotelian conception of divine intellect as ἐνέργεια. Compare *Strom*. VII,7,7: καὶ ἔστιν ὡς εἰπεῖν πατρική τις ἐνέργεια ὁ υἱός ("... and the Son is, so to say, a kind of activity of the Father").

> V,71,2/*SChr* 71,5-13: Λάβοιμεν δ' ἂν τὸν μὲν καθαρτικὸν τρόπον ὁμολογίᾳ, τὸν δὲ ἐποπτικὸν ἀναλύσει ἐπὶ τὴν πρώτην νόησιν προχωροῦντες, δι' ἀναλύσεως ἐκ τῶν ὑποκειμένων αὐτῷ τὴν ἀρχὴν ποιούμενοι, ἀφελόντες μὲν τοῦ σώματος τὰς φυσικὰς ποιότητας, περιελόντες δὲ τὴν εἰς τὸ βάθος διάστασιν, εἶτα τὴν εἰς τὸ πλάτος, καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις τὴν εἰς τὸ μῆκος· τὸ γὰρ ὑπολειφθὲν σημεῖόν ἐστι μονὰς ὡς εἰπεῖν θέσιν ἔχουσα, ἧς ἐὰν περιέλωμεν τὴν θέσιν, νοεῖται μονάς.
>
> We might attain the cathartic mode by confession and the epoptical one by analysis, as we advance to the primary intellection. By means of analysis, starting from things subjected to him [i.e., Christ], we will abstract physical qualities from the body and remove the dimension of depth, then that of breadth, and then that of length. For the point that remains is a monad which, so to speak, has a position, and if we remove its position, the monad is perceived intellectually.

ὁμοῦ πάντα καὶ αὖ οὐχ ὁμοῦ, ὅτι ἕκαστον δύναμις ἰδία ("Intellect is all things together and also not together, because each is a special power" [transl. Armstrong]; cf. S.R.C. Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism*, Oxford 1971, 206-207, who quotes a different segment of this passage in connection with *Strom.* IV,156,2). For the intelligible forms as δυνάμεις cf. also Plotinus, *Enn*. VI,2,21, quoted above. For the doctrine of οἱ πρωτόκτιστοι in Clement's thought cf. B.G. Bucur, "The Other Clement of Alexandria: Cosmic Hierarchy and Interiorized Apocalypticism," *VigChr* 60, 2006, 251-268.

52) In *Eclogae* 57,1, Clement identifies οἱ πρωτόκτιστοι with θρόνοι in Col 1,16, not with ἀρχαὶ or ἐξουσίαι mentioned in the same verse. Ibid. 57,4, it is stated that ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ παντὸς ὀνόματος ὀνομαζομένου (Eph 1:21) are οἱ τελειωθέντες... εἰς τὴν πρωτόκτιστον τῶν ἀγγέλων φύσιν. It implies that the nature of the πρωτόκτιστοι is not transcended by those who have reached the utmost perfection. Finally, in *Excerpta* 27,1-2 (in an exegesis of Exod 28), ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἐξουσίαι are explicitly placed outside the νοητὸς κοσμός.

According to Clement, ὁ ἐποπτικὸς τρόπος, the summit of the "gnostic" mysteries, can be attained by ἀναλύσις in the course of which we advance ἐπὶ τὴν πρώτην νόησιν. This is the beginning of the famous description of *via negationis* the parallels of which are known from Alcinous and Plutarch.[53] For the expression πρώτη νόησις see Alcinous, *Did.* 155,39-42.[54]

The starting point of the "analysis" is described as τὰ ὑποκείμενα αὐτῷ. What does the pronoun αὐτῷ refer to? The most obvious interpretation is to connect αὐτῷ to τὸν δὲ ἐποπτικόν [scil. τρόπον], mentioned earlier in the same sentence. However, the meaning of the expression "things subjected to the epoptical mode [of initiation]" is unclear. The next possible referent of αὐτῷ is found in V,70,4, where Clement interprets certain Euripidean anapests as verses in which the poet "unawares speaks about the Saviour himself." Despite the difficulty of linking the pronoun to an antecedent placed relatively far in the text, the possibility that αὐτῷ refers to Christ is nevertheless attractive, as it corresponds to the above mentioned description of Christ as "the head of all things," to whom heaven, created through him, is "subjected" (οὐρανοῦ… τοῦ ὑποκειμένου τῇ κεφαλῇ τῶν πάντων τῷ Χριστῷ).[55] Plutarch's account of the method of abstraction indicates that the expression τὰ ὑποκείμενα αὐτῷ in *Strom.* V,71,2 could designate the heavenly bodies.[56]

> V,71,3/*SChr* 71,13-17: Εἰ τοίνυν, ἀφελόντες πάντα ὅσα πρόσεστι τοῖς σώμασιν καὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις ἀσωμάτοις, ἐπιρρίψαιμεν ἑαυτοὺς εἰς τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ Χριστοῦ κἀκεῖθεν εἰς τὸ ἀχανὲς ἁγιότητι προΐοιμεν, τῇ νοήσει τοῦ παντοκράτορος ἁμῇ γέ πῃ προσάγοιμεν <ἄν>, οὐχ ὅ ἐστιν, ὃ δὲ μή ἐστι γνωρίσαντες.
>
> Now if we abstract all attributes of bodies and of the so-called incorporeal [realities] and throw ourselves into the greatness of Christ and thence, with holiness,

---

53) Cf. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 245.

54) Alcinous, *Did.* 155,39-42: καὶ ἐπεὶ τῶν νοητῶν τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ὑπάρχει, ὡς αἱ ἰδέαι, τὰ δὲ δεύτερα, ὡς τὰ εἴδη τὰ ἐπὶ τῇ ὕλῃ ἀχώριστα ὄντα τῆς ὕλης, καὶ νόησις ἔσται διττή, ἡ μὲν τῶν πρώτων, ἡ δὲ τῶν δευτέρων ("…and since of intelligible objects some are primary, such as the [transcendent] Ideas, and others secondary, such as the forms in matter which are inseparable from matter, so also intellection will be twofold, the one kind of primary objects, the other of secondary"). Translated by J. Dillon, *Alcinous. The Handbook of Platonism*, Clarendon: Oxford 1993, 6. For the distinction between ἰδέα and εἶδος cf. parallels collected by J. Whittaker, *Alcinoos. Enseignement des doctrines de Platon*, Budé: Paris 1990, 85, note 63. I quote the Greek text according to the latter edition.

55) *Strom.* V,38,2; cf. above, 15, footnote 42.

56) Cf. Plutarch, *Plat. quaest.* 1001f1-1002a3, where the method of abstraction is applied to the heavenly bodies.

> advance to the void, we might, in one way or another, draw near to the intellection of the Almighty, not recognizing what he is, but what he is not.

According to Clement's description, the "analysis" proceeds by abstracting all attributes of bodies, as well as of τὰ λεγόμενα ἀσώματα so that we may "be thrown" εἰς τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ Χριστοῦ and thence, with holiness, advance εἰς τὸ ἀχανές.

The expression τὰ λεγόμενα ἀσώματα is difficult and there are at least four possible interpretations of it. According to Le Boulluec, it denotes place, emptiness and time, that is, three of the things that the Stoics described as incorporeal.[57] But there is no indication in the text to support the view that Clement regarded these concepts as objects whose attributes should be removed. Perhaps more likely, τὰ λεγόμενα ἀσώματα might be the abstracted qualities of the body (such as depth, breadth or length) conceived as the objects of thought.[58] Again, with regard to Clement's description of the goal of the "analytic" method as πρώτη νόησις, the expression τὰ λεγόμενα ἀσώματα could also refer to what Alcinous calls τὰ δεύτερα νοητά, that is, the forms in matter.[59]

However, the most likely explanation is that "the incorporeal realities" are some heavenly powers subjected to Christ, such as those mentioned in Ephesians 1:21: rules, authorities, powers, dominions and "every name that is named."[60] The fact that Clement calls them ἀσώματα with some reserve could be explained against the background of *Excerpta* 11,3, where it is argued that, by comparison to the Son, even the first-created angels are bodies.[61]

With τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ Χριστοῦ compare *Strom*. V,3,1 (τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ λόγου); *QDS* 8,1 (τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ σωτῆρος). It is probably an allusion to Ephesians 1:19f.: "…the overflowing greatness of his [i.e., God's] power (τὸ ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ) for us who believe, according to the working of his great power (κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ κράτους τῆς

---

57) Cf. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 246.

58) For depth, breadth and length as incorporeal qualities cf. [Galen,] *Quod qualitates incorporae sint* XIX,465 (Kühn), according to the TLG electronic database.

59) Cf. Alcinous, *Did.* 155,39-42, quoted above, note 54.

60) Cf. *Strom*. V,34,7; *Eclogae* 57,4.

61) *Excerpta* 11,3: ὡς πρὸς τὴν σύγκρισιν τῶν τῇδε σωμάτων (οἷον ἄστρων) ἀσώματα καὶ ἀνείδεα, <ἀλλ'> ὡς πρὸς τὴν σύγκρισιν τοῦ Υἱοῦ σώματα μεμετρημένα καὶ αἰσθητά ("In comparison to bodies in this world, as for example those of stars, they are without body and form. However, in comparison to the Son they are sized sensible bodies").

ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ) that God put to work (ἣν ἐνήργησεν) in Christ…"[62] Clement may have chosen this description of the Son precisely because the μέγεθος of the divine power corresponds to the ἐνέργεια of God in Ephesians 1:19 (compare *Strom*. V,38,7; VII,7,7, quoted above). However, parallels in Philo and Plotinus indicate that Clement's philosophical sources could have played a part, too.[63]

The concept of "holiness" may be compared with ἁγιωσύνη of the perfect gnostic in *Strom.* VII,14,1. Although ἁγιότητι in 71,3 is usually interpreted as the dative of means, I submit that it might be better explained as the dative of accompanying circumstance.[64]

---

62) NRSV, modified. The passage is not mentioned by Osborn, *Clement of Alexandria*, 124-125, in his discussion of the New Testament background of the expression μέγεθος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

63) Philo of Alexandria, *Opif.* 23, says that God does not confer benefits upon nature "in proportion to the greatness of his bounties" (οὐ πρὸς τὸ μέγεθος τῶν ἑαυτοῦ χαρίτων), since they are "unlimited and unending" (ἀπερίγραφοι γὰρ αὗταί γε καὶ ἀτελεύτητοι). Later on he adds that "God's powers overflow" (τοῦ μὲν αἱ δυνάμεις ὑπερβάλλουσι) and creation is "too weak to contain their greatness" (ἀσθενέστερον ὂν ἢ ὥστε δέξασθαι τὸ μέγεθος αὐτῶν). "The powers" are obviously the forms of the intelligible world, which, as Philo puts it, is "nothing else then the Logos of God" (cf. *Opif.* 24-25; Colson's LCL translation consulted). The passage is quoted by A. Choufrine, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis. Studies in Clement of Alexandria's Appropriation of His Background*, Peter Lang: New York 2002, 188, in the context of his discussion of Clement's notion of infinity. The idea of the greatness of Logos might be also compared with Plotinus, *Enn.* VI,2,21: ὅρα τοίνυν ἐν τούτῳ τῷ μεγάλῳ νῷ καὶ ἀμηχάνῳ… ὅπως ἔνι τὰ πάντα ἐξ αὐτοῦ ("Well then, see how in this great, this overwhelming Intellect… all things which come from it are present"). According to Plotinus, "the wonderful powers" (θαυμασταὶ δυνάμεις) of the Intellect are "not weak," but "because they are pure, they are the greatest of powers (μέγισταί εἰσι)" and "without any limit" (οὐ τὸ μέχρι τινὸς ἔχουσαι). "And so they are infinite and the greatness [of the Intellect] is also infinity" (ἄπειροι τοίνυν καὶ ἀπειρία καὶ τὸ μέγα). Plotinus later describes the appearance of the form of magnitude in the Intellect "with the continuity of its activity" (μετὰ δὲ τοῦ συνεχοῦς τῆς ἐνεργείας μέγεθος προφαινόμενον) [Armstrong's LCL translation, modified]. A parallel to the expression "greatness of Christ" is found in the Sethian treatise *Gospel of the Egyptians* (NHC III,2,54,19-20 = IV,2,66,7-8).

64) Le Boulluec interprets ἁγιότητι as the dative of means and compares it with an earlier (71,2) description of the means by which the cathartic and the epoptical modes are reached, respectively: ὁμολογίᾳ… ἀναλύσει. However, I find it difficult to conceive of holiness as a means of progress; cf. *Strom*. VII,14,1, where Clement describes holiness as a state to which one is elevated (…τοῦ ἀναληφθέντος εἰς ἁγιωσύνην ἀνθρώπου).

> V,83,5/*SChr* 83,19-22: θεόσδοτος τοίνυν ἡ σοφία, δύναμις οὖσα τοῦ πατρός, προτρέπει μὲν ἡμῶν τὸ αὐτεξούσιον, ἀποδέχεται δὲ τὴν πίστιν καὶ ἀμείβεται τὴν ἐπίστασιν τῆς ἐκλογῆς ἄκρᾳ κοινωνίᾳ.
>
> For wisdom, since it is a power of the Father, is given by God. It exhorts our free will, accepts [our] faith and rewards the attentiveness of [our] choice with supreme communion.

In *Protrepticus* 115,1 Clement depicts faith as "a kind of rent paid to God for our dwelling here."[65] It is a "recompense of gratitude" (μισθὸς εὐχάριστος) given by humans to God who exhorts them (προτρεπομένῳ θεῷ).[66] A similar model of exchange comes into play in our passage, but another stage is adduced. Divine activity is described by three verbs that correspond to three phases of interaction between God and humans: God's wisdom exhorts us (προτρέπει), accepts our faith (ἀποδέχεται) and rewards it (ἀμείβεται). The faith accepted by God in the second stage is an act of human will (τὸ αὐτεξούσιον), and probably the same act is characterized by the expression ἐπίστασις or ἐπίστασις τῆς ἐκλογῆς.[67] Scholars translate this expression in a variety of ways, but, to my knowledge, one important possibility of interpretation has not yet been explored.

The word ἐκλογή has two different meanings in Clement's works: a) "selection" in the sense of something or somebody selected, often used as a collective designation of "the elect";[68] b) the act of choosing, normally used in reference to human choice.[69] On at least one occasion it is difficult to decide which of the two meanings is involved,[70] and this ambiguity might be intentional, as it is precisely human choice what "makes the difference" between "the elect" and the rest in Clement's view.[71] In our passage, ἐκλογή is usually understood in the sense of divine "election" or "the elect" (depending on whether it is construed as a subject or an object of

---

65) …οἷόν τι ἐνοίκιον τῷ θεῷ τῆς ἐνταῦθα ἐνοικήσεως. I believe that ἐνοίκιον refers to εὐπείθειαν which should be read with Heyse (and most editors) instead of the ms. εὐπάθειαν.

66) Ibid; I use G.W. Butterworth's LCL translation.

67) With a special emphasis on the third stage, the model of interaction between human and divine will is more fully elaborated in *Strom*. VII,48,1-2.

68) Cf. *Strom.* III,63,4; 69,1 (cf. *Excerpta* 21,1); V,3,4; 63,7; 141,3; VI,106,1; 107,1. The word is often used in the Basilidean fragments in this sense; cf. below, 28 and references in footnote 95.

69) Cf. *Protr*. 77,3; 90,1; *Strom*. II,129,1; IV,79,2; 148,1-149,1; V,96,6; VI,48,7; VII,15,2.

70) Cf. *Strom.* IV,80,2 and van den Hoek, *SChr* 463, 187, footnote 4.

71) Cf. *Strom.* V,141,3 and below, 28-29.

ἐπίστασις). However, the fact that the object of divine exhortation is ἡμῶν τὸ αὐτεξούσιον makes the other alternative, namely that ἐκλογή designates the act of human choice, at least equally attractive. As far as ἐπίστασις is concerned, I think that the most plausible equivalent found in dictionaries is "attention."[72] The word might refer to what Clement calls "voluntary anticipation" (πρόληψις ἑκούσιος) in the second book of *Stromata*, that is, to an act of mind whose aim is to "grasp" the meaning of divine communication.[73] In our passage, Clement seems to understand faith as a "choice" that is based on and accompanied by the "attention" paid to the voice of divine exhortation. It is presumably this attentiveness of faith that the expression ἐπίστασις τῆς ἐκλογῆς denotes. Compare also Clement's statement (made in the context of his discussion of faith as προαίρεσις) that "concentrated choice (ἀπερίσπαστος προαίρεσις) greatly contributes to the attainment of knowledge."[74]

For ἄκρα κοινωνία compare *Strom.* VI,76,3 (ἄκρα υἱοθεσία); VII,59,1 (πρὸς τὸ θεῖον συνάφειά τε καὶ κοινωνία). Clement possibly exploits the ambiguity of the word ἐκλογή by construing the sentence in a way that enables the reader to interpret τῆς ἐκλογῆς as a possessive genitive linked to ἄκρᾳ κοινωνίᾳ.[75]

---

72) Cf. already Hervetus (quoted below, note 75); ANF: "application"; Stählin (*BKV* 2/19, Bd. IV, 1937, 191): "die Achtsamkeit." It seems to me that Voulet's translation of ἐπίστασις as "l'attente" ("expectation") in *SChr* 278, 163, followed by Pini (615: "l'attesa"), stretches the attested meaning of the word.

73) Cf. *Strom.* II,8,4; 17,1-3; 28,1. For this meaning of ἐπίστασις see especially *QDS* 5,3: "For the sayings which appear to have been simplified by the Lord Himself to His disciples are found even now, on account of the extraordinary degree of wisdom in them, to need no less but more attention (οὐδὲν ἧττονος, ἀλλὰ πλείονος ἔτι καὶ νῦν τῆς ἐπιστάσεως εὑρίσκεται δεόμενα) than His dark and suggestive utterances" (translated by Butterworth). The interpretation of ἐπίστασις as attention by which understanding is reached helps to explain passages in Clement's work where the meaning of ἐπίστασις comes close to "apprehension." Cf. especially *Strom.* VI,111,3 and 115,3, where translators often render ἐπίστασις as knowledge or understanding, but also *Strom.* II,135,3, V,17,1; VII,56,2, where the meaning of ἐπίστασις is arguably the same. It is perhaps worth noting that in the *Suda* lexicon the first equivalent to ἐπίστασις is γνῶσις (the second is προσοχή).

74) Strom. II,9,3: μεγάλην γοῦν εἰς γνῶσιν ῥοπὴν ἀπερίσπαστος παρέχει προαίρεσις.

75) This is apparently the interpretation of Hervetus (1551) who translates the whole passage as follows: *Ergo divinitus data sapientia, quae est virtus patris, adhortatur quidem nostrum liberum arbitrium, excipit autem fidem, curamque et attentionem remuneratur electionis suprema communicatione* (170f1-4).

> V,90,2/*SChr* 90,4-6: Ναὶ μὴν Ἐπικούρῳ μὲν ἡ τοῦ αὐτομάτου παρείσδυσις οὐ παρακολουθήσαντι τῷ ῥητῷ γέγονεν ἐντεῦθεν «Ματαιότης ματαιοτήτων, τὰ πάντα ματαιότης» [Eccl 1:2].
>
> Also, [the concept of] 'accident' got through to Epicurus, who failed to understand what is being said, from the following passage: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

In doxographic accounts of Epicurean physics the concept of τὸ αὐτομάτον is often employed in order to emphasize the difference between the (Platonist/Stoic) idea of providential care and the fact that Epicurean cosmology is devoid of a final cause.[76] Clement's association of this concept with ματαιότης in Ecclesiastes is probably based on the etymology of the word αὐτομάτον attested by Aristotle: οὕτω δὴ τὸ αὐτόματον καὶ κατὰ τὸ ὄνομα ὅταν αὐτὸ μάτην γένηται ("So then *automaton*, as the form of the word implies, means an occurrence that is *in itself* [*auto*] to *no purpose* [*matēn*]").[77]

> V,98,4/*SChr* 98,10-15: Ἴσως <γὰρ> τὴν ἐκλεκτὴν ταύτην φύσιν γνώσεως ἐφιεμένην μαντεύεται [scil. Πλάτων], εἰ μή τι τρεῖς τινας ὑποτιθέμενος φύσεις, τρεῖς πολιτείας, ὡς ὑπέλαβόν τινες, διαγράφει, καὶ Ἰουδαίων μὲν ἀργυρᾶν, Ἑλλήνων δὲ τὴν τρίτην, Χριστιανῶν δέ, οἷς χρυσὸς ὁ βασιλικὸς ἐγκαταμέμικται, τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα.
>
> Perhaps he [i.e., Plato] presages that which is known as the elected nature longing for knowledge, unless by postulating three distinct natures he describes three ways of life, as some have suggested, the silver one of the Jews, the third one of the Greeks, and the one of Christians, into whom the royal gold is mingled, the Holy Spirit.

Shortly after quoting Plato, *Resp*. III, 415a2-7, where the narrative about the three classes of citizens endowed with gold, silver and iron/bronze respectively, is introduced,[78] Clement presents two interpretations of the

---

76) Cf. Epicurea, fr. 359, 383, 394 (Usener). For the context cf. A.A. Long–D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic philosophers*, I, Cambridge 1987, 57-65. Expressions "accidental necessity" (ἡ κατὰ τὸ αὐτόματον ἀνάγκη) and "accident" (ταὐτόματον) are used in an Epicurean fragment preserved on the Herculaneum papyri (34,27,8-9.11-12; 30,13-14 Arrighetti, *Epicuro, Opere*, ed. 2, Turin 1973), in the context of a polemic against (Democritean) determinism (for the context cf. Long–Sedley, *The Hellenistic philosophers*, I, 102-112).

77) Aristotle, *Phys*. 197b29-30 (LCL, P.H. Wicksteed–F.M. Cornford).

78) *Strom.* V,98,2 (quoting Plato, *Resp*. III, 415a2-7): «ἐστὲ μὲν γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἐν τῇ πόλει ἀδελφοί, ὡς φήσομεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς μυθολογοῦντες, ἀλλ' ὁ θεὸς πλάττων, ὅσοι μὲν ὑμῶν

passage. According to the first one (directly related to the "golden" class only), the gold which, as Plato puts it, God "mixed into the origin" of those who are "fit to rule" (ὅσοι… ἱκανοὶ ἄρχειν, χρυσὸν ἐν τῇ γενέσει συνέμιξεν αὐτοῖς), is understood as an image with which Plato presages (μαντεύεται) "that which is known as the elected nature longing for knowledge." According to the second interpretation, Plato describes the Jewish, the Gentile, and the Christian "way of life," the gold being a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

The first interpretation intriguingly seems to presuppose a soteriological doctrine normally associated with Clement's "heterodox" opponents, namely the doctrine of the elected nature. While recognizing that "l'expression fait songer à la doctrine gnostique," Le Boulluec assumes that, in this context, Clement perhaps alludes to Romans 8:29: ὅτι οὓς προέγνω, καὶ προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνος τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ("For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first born among many brothers").[79] However, it would be very surprising if Clement intended to suggest a possibility that the Pauline concept of predestination might be explained in terms of the idea of the elected nature, as he rejects this very idea repeatedly.[80] Rather, I think that by describing Plato as a seer who presages "that which is known as the elected nature longing for knowledge," Clement ironically indicates that the Valentinian concept of the elected nature (and perhaps, by implication, their classification of natures as a whole) is derived from Plato's myth in the *Republic* (a theory which, I believe, might still deserve consideration).[81]

ἱκανοὶ ἄρχειν, χρυσὸν ἐν τῇ γενέσει συνέμιξεν αὐτοῖς, διὸ τιμιώτατοί εἰσιν· ὅσοι δὲ ἐπίκουροι, ἄργυρον· σίδηρον δὲ καὶ χαλκὸν τοῖς γεωργοῖς καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις δημιουργοῖς.» ("And all of you in the city are brothers," we'll say to them in telling our story, "but the god who made you mixed some gold into the origin of those who are fit to rule, because they are most valuable. He put silver in those who are auxiliaries and iron and bronze in the farmers and other craftsmen.") Modified translation of G.M.A. Grube–C.D.C. Reeve, in: J.M. Cooper–D.S. Hutchinson (eds.), *Plato*, 1050.

79) NRSV translation. The passage is quoted in *Strom*. IV,46,1; cf. also *Paed.* III,20,5; *Strom*. VII,6,6; 37,5. For Clement's reception of the idea of predestination cf. also allusions to Eph 1:4-5 in *Protr*. 6,3; *Strom.* VI,76,3; VII,107,5.

80) Cf. *Strom*. II,11,1-2; 115,2; V,3,3-4; VI,105,1.

81) According to Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* I,6,2, Valentinians compared the spiritual nature to gold; this may be a reflection of the Platonic myth according to which the rulers of the city are endowed with gold. Cf. Clement, *Strom*. II,116,2, where the metaphor of gold is probably employed as a polemical allusion to the Valentinian doctrine.

> V,133,7/*SChr* 133,19-25: Τοῦ πατρὸς ἄρα καὶ ποιητοῦ τῶν συμπάντων ἐμφύτως καὶ ἀδιδάκτως ἀντιλαμβάνεται πάντα πρὸς πάντων, τὰ μὲν ἄψυχα συμπαθοῦντα τῷ ζῴῳ, τῶν δὲ ἐμψύχων τὰ μὲν ἤδη ἀθάνατα καθ' ἡμέραν ἐργαζόμενα, τῶν δὲ ἔτι θνητῶν τὰ μὲν ἐν φόβῳ, καὶ διὰ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτῶν ἔτι κατὰ γαστρὸς ὀχούμενα, τὰ δὲ αὐτεξουσίῳ λογισμῷ, καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πάντες Ἕλληνές τε καὶ βάρβαροι.
>
> All beings naturally, without teaching, perceive the Father and the Creator of the universe in mutual relations, the inanimate ones by sympathy with the living being; the animate ones are either those already immortal who [perceive him] by daily practise, or those who are still mortal. Of the latter [class] some [perceive him] in fear, namely those who are still borne in the womb of their mother, some by free exercise of reason, namely all human beings, Greeks as well as Barbarians.

Clement distinguishes four classes of beings and their respective ways of "perceiving" (ἀντιλαμβάνομαι) the Creator. τὰ ἄψυχα perceive him συμπαθοῦντα τῷ ζῴῳ (this would be class 1). τὰ ἔμψυχα are divided into two groups: τὰ ἤδη ἀθάνατα καθ' ἡμέραν ἐργαζόμενα (class 2) and τὰ ἔτι θνητά. The latter group is further divided into those who perceive him ἐν φόβῳ (class 3) and those perceiving him αὐτεξουσίῳ λογισμῷ (class 4).

The first class probably includes plants.[82] τὸ ζῷον with whom they are in sympathy is presumably the cosmos.[83] Compare Epictetus, *Diss.* I,14,5: "But if the plants and our own bodies are so closely bound up with the universe and in sympathy with it (τὰ φυτὰ μὲν καὶ τὰ ἡμέτερα σώματα οὕτως ἐνδέδεται τοῖς ὅλοις καὶ συμπέπονθεν), is not the same much more true of our souls?"[84] For the idea that plants can perceive god, compare Dio Chrysostomos, *Or.* XII,35: "Stranger still is the fact that even the plants, which have no conception of anything, but are inanimate and voiceless beings regulated by a simple kind of nature (οἷς μηδεμία μηδενὸς ἔννοια, ἀλλὰ ἄψυχα καὶ ἄφωνα ἁπλῇ τινι φύσει διοικούμενα), nevertheless voluntarily and willingly (ἑκουσίως καὶ βουλόμενα) produce their appropriate fruit. So exceedingly evident and manifest is the will and power of this god

---

82) Cf. *Strom.* II,110,4 and Clement's fragment 38 (*Clemens Alexandrinus*, vol. III, 219-220); Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. math.* IX,81; *SVF* II,708-711.

83) For the designation of the cosmos as τὸ ζῷον cf. Plato, *Tim.* 30b6-c1, 32d1-34a1, 92c6; Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. math.* IX,107 (= *SVF* I,110); Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae*, VII,138.142-143 (= *SVF* II,633-634); Alcinous, *Did.* 169,41f. etc. Cf. also Philo of Alexandria, *Quaest. Gen*. IV,188, discussed by D. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato*, Brill: Leiden 1986, 157, who provides most of the references given above.

84) W.A. Oldfather's (LCL) translation consulted.

(οὕτω πάνυ ἐναργὴς καὶ πρόδηλος ἡ τοῦδε τοῦ θεοῦ γνώμη καὶ δύναμις)."[85] Dio later ascribes this activity of the plants (specifically the trees) to their ξύνεσις.[86] A passage in Simplicius' commentary on the *Dissertations* of Epictetus indicates the possibility that the class of the inanimate beings perceiving God might include the stones, as well.[87]

The immortal beings in the second class are the angels.[88] Their "daily practise" may include the liturgical acts of heavenly beings mentioned in Strom. V,35,1; 36,3-4.[89]

The third class is curiously described as embryos ("those who are still borne in the womb of their mother"). The theory that embryos relate to God through fear is, to my knowledge, otherwise unattested. Whether or not the passage has a literal meaning,[90] I think it is likely that Clement introduces embryos as a separate class in order to illustrate a distinction he makes on other occasions, namely between religious submission based on fear on the one hand, and faith based on rational choice on the other.[91] The

---

85) J.W. Cohoon's (LCL) translation consulted.

86) *Or.* XII,36; cf. Theiler, *Die Vorbereitung*, 143. The theoretical background of this concept seems to be provided by Cicero, *Nat. d.* II,29 (LCL, H. Rackham): "…every natural object that is not a homogenous and simple substance but a complex and composite one must contain within it some ruling principle (*aliquem principatum*), for example in man the intelligence (*mentem*), in the lower animals something resembling intelligence (*quiddam simile mentis*) that is the source of appetition. With trees and plants the ruling principle is believed to be located in the roots (*in arborum autem et earum rerum quae gignuntur e terra radicibus inesse principatus putatur*). I use the term ruling principle as the equivalent of the Greek ἡγεμονικόν…" The parallel is discussed by Jiří Pavlík in the commentary to his Czech translation of Dio's *Olympic Discourse* (*Dión Chrýsostomos o výtvarném umění, náboženství a filosofii*, Prague 2004, 57, 83 and note 209).

87) Cf. Simplicius, *Comm. Epict. Enchir.* 95,25-28 (I. Hadot, *Simplicius, Commentaire sur le* Manuel *d'Épictète*, Brill 1996, 38,172-175): Φύσει μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ἄνθρωποι μόνοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἄλογα ζῶα, καὶ τὰ φυτὰ, καὶ λίθοι, καὶ πάντα ἁπλῶς τὰ ὄντα, κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δύναμιν ἕκαστον ἐπέστραπται πρὸς τὸν θεόν ("Not only human beings, but also the irrational animals, the plants, the stones, absolutely everything there is, turn towards God by nature, each according to their ability"). The passage is quoted by H.-J. Klauck, *Dion von Prusa, Olympische Rede oder Über die erste Erkenntnis Gottes*, Darmstadt 2004, 129, note 177.

88) Cf. Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 361.

89) For ἐργάζομαι in the relevant sense see 1 Cor 9:13; cf. Liddel–Scott, 681, *s.v.* ἐργάζομαι II.2.b.

90) Literal explanation is proposed by Le Boulluec, *SChr* 279, 361.

91) Cf. *Paed.* I,31,1; 33,3; 87,1; *Strom.* VII,73,5; *QDS* 9,2-10,1. Apart from those Jews who, according to Clement, obey the Law in the manner of slaves whose fear of their master is aligned with hatred (*Paed.* I,87,1; cf. *Strom.* I,173,6, where this slavish attitude is

fourth class includes "all human beings" perhaps in so far as they develop the capacity of rational choice which separates them from animals.[92]

> V,141,3/*SChr* 141,7-9: Μεταλαμβάνει δὲ τῆς εὐποιίας [scil. τοῦ θεοῦ] ἕκαστος ἡμῶν πρὸς ὃ βούλεται, ἐπεὶ τὴν διαφορὰν τῆς ἐκλογῆς ἀξία γενομένη ψυχῆς αἵρεσίς τε καὶ συνάσκησις πεποίηκεν.
>
> And each of us participates in the beneficence [of God] as much as one wills, since the difference of the election is made by the worthy choice and discipline of the soul.

Clement closes his exposition by reminding his audience of the basic principle of his ethic: humans participate in God's beneficence (even election) according to their choice.[93] The choice and the discipline worthy of election is the factor that makes the difference between those elected and the rest. Clement formulates this doctrine in a way that subversively invokes the soteriological ideas of his opponents. διαφορὰ τῆς ἐκλογῆς is probably an allusion to the Valentinian concept of τὸ διαφέρον γένος[94] as well as the Basilidean concept of ἐκλογή.[95] Clement uses his opponents' terminology to emphasize the main point of dispute: Whereas for them—in Clement's

---

distinguished from the fearfulness of a faithful servant), the class of "embryos" might also include the pagans, whose δεισιδαιμονία is nurtured by fear as well as other passions (cf. *Protr*. 53,1; 101,2; cf. also ibid. 89,1; 109,3, where pagans are compared to children). Cf. also *Strom*. II,58,1, where Clement describes the pagan life (before the rebirth in Spirit) as προβιότης ("fore-life").

92) Cf. *Protr*. 120,2, where Jesus as the Logos summons "so many of mankind as are governed by reason, both barbarians and Greeks" (ὅσοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων λογικοί, καὶ βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες) [LCL, Butterworth]. Contrast *Protr*. 61,4, where the pagan addressees are described as those who "have done violence to man, and erased by dishonour the divine element of creation (τὸ ἔνθεον τοῦ πλάσματος ἐλέγχει ἀπαράξαντες)" [*Protr.* 61,4; Butterworth's translation, modified]. Cf. also ibid. 25,3-4; 56,2; 108,2. For the rational capacity as that element which distinguishes human beings from animals cf. also *Protr*. 100,3; 120,3; *Paed.* I,7,1.3; II,1,2; *Strom*. V,87,4. Cf. also *Strom*. VI,135,4, according to which this "ruling principle" (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν) is endowed with "the ability to choose" (τὴν προαιρετικὴν… ἔχει δύναμιν).

93) Cf. *Strom.* IV,168,2; VI,105,1-2; M. Müller, "Freiheit. Über Autonomie und Gnade von Paulus bis Clemens von Alexandrien," in: *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 25, 1926, 222.

94) Cf. *Strom.* II,38,5; IV,90,3; 91,2; *Excerpta* 21,1; 26,1-2; 35,1; 41,1.

95) Cf. *Strom.* II,10,1.3; 36,1; 37,6; 38,2; III,3,3; IV,165,3; V,4,1

eyes, at least—ἡ διαφορὰ τῆς ἐκλογῆς is based on a special nature,[96] for him the decisive factor is αἵρεσίς τε καὶ συνάσκησις worthy of election.[97]

Conclusions

The main results of my investigation of the various passages discussed in this paper may be summarized as follows:

1. Clement's description of the difference between Christian faith and knowledge in *Strom.* V,1,2 seems to be based on the epistemological distinction between assuming that something is the case and understanding what something is, first elaborated by Aristotle and applied to the enquiry about god(s) in late Hellenistic philosophy.
2. In *Strom.* V,2,5-6, where the 'common' and the 'excellent' faith are distinguished, 'the common faith' arises from 'learning,' that is, the catechetic instruction, according to what is grammatically the most plausible interpretation of the textual version preserved in Codex Laura.
3. In Clement's report on the Basilidean concept of faith, Schwartz's emendation in *Strom.* V,3,2, according to which νόησιν is grammatically an object should be retained, but I argue that the whole syntagma τὴν ἐξαίρετον πίστιν ἅμα καὶ βασιλείαν might be construed as a subject, since the identification of πίστις as βασιλεία is already implied in the preceding sentence.
4. *Strom.* V,6,3 seems to be the best available evidence of the employment of the triad being—life—thinking before Plotinus.
5. Clement's interpretation of the "object" of Abram's vision in *Strom.* V,8,6 (exegesis of Genesis 15:5) may be compared with *Apocalypse of Abraham* 10:3-4,8.
6. Clement's polemic against those "who require proof as a pledge of truth" in *Strom.* V,18,3 could echo Aristotle's criticism of researchers who demand the proof even of the first premise of a proof in *Metaphysica* IV, 1011a8-13.

---

96) Cf. *Strom*. II,10,1-3; 115,1; V,3,2-3.
97) Cf. also above, 22-23.

7. *Strom.* V,24,1 should not be marked as a beginning of a new paragraph, since it is a continuation of a theme launched in 23,2, namely the idea of symbol as a means of divine communication.
8. The interpretation of *Strom*. V,38,6 to the effect that the Son transcends the intelligible realm is doubtful.
9. In *Strom.* V,71,2, the expression πρώτη νόησις may be compared with Alcinous, *Did.* 155,39-42. The term τὰ ὑποκείμενα probably refers to the heavenly bodies.
10. In *Strom.* V,71,3, the expression τὰ λεγόμενα ἀσώματα might denote the heavenly powers subjected to Christ, while τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ Χριστοῦ is probably an allusion to Ephesians 1:19.
11. In *Strom.* V,83,5, the expression ἐπίστασις τῆς ἐκλογῆς arguably designates the attentiveness of the choice of faith.
12. In *Strom.* V,90,2, Clement's association of the concept of τὸ αὐτομάτον with ματαιότης in Ecclesiastes is probably based on the etymology of the word τὸ αὐτομάτον attested by Aristotle, *Phys*. 197b29-30.
13. In *Strom.* V,98,4, Clement seems to indicate that the Valentinian concept of the elected nature is derived from Plato's narrative about the three classes of citizens in the *Republic*.
14. In *Strom.* V,133,7, where Clement distinguishes four classes of beings and their respective ways of "perceiving" the Creator, τὰ ἄψυχα includes plants and possibly stones and τῷ ζῴῳ refers to the cosmos. The class of embryos is presumably introduced in order to illustrate a distinction between religious submission based on fear and faith based on rational choice.
15. In *Strom.* V,141,3, when describing the factor that "makes the difference" between those elected and the rest, Clement subversively employs the terminology of his Valentinian and Basilidean opponents.

Copyright of Vigiliae Christianae is the property of Brill Academic Publishers and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.